

REMARKS

Claims 1-23 were pending in the above-identified application. Of these, claims 20-23 are allowed, claims 1-12, 14, and 16-19 are rejected, and claims 13 and 15 are objected to. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration.

Rejections Under 35 USC §102

Claims 1-11, 14, and 16-19 stand rejected under §102(b) as anticipated by Measor et al. (5,699,386). Applicants address each rejection in turn.

Claim 1

Claim 1 recites “a driver circuit ... to output onto [a] conductive path a signal having a voltage level that varies in time between at least three distinct levels representative of at least three distinct digital values...” Among other elements, the driver circuit includes “an equalization circuit to adjust the voltage level of the signal output by the driver circuit at a first time according to a digital value represented by the signal at a previous time...”

The examiner finds support for the “driver circuit” of claim 1 in Measor’s figures 2 and 4. First, with respect to figure 2, the examiner finds “a driver circuit (see figs. 2, 29, 72 elements 1, 4, 2101, 4010)...” (Office Action, page 2). Measor’s Figure 2, reproduced below for ease of review, does not show a driver circuit or the elements with the examiner’s listed enumerations. Applicants request clarification. In any event, Measure’s Figure 2 does not depict the driver circuit of claim 1, and so fails to anticipate claim 1 for at least this reason.

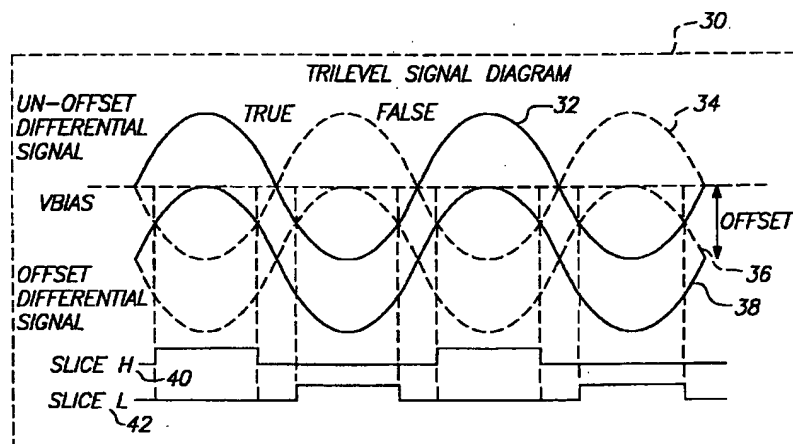


FIG. 2

Next, referencing Measor's Figure 3, the examiner argues that the driver of Measor includes "an equalization circuit (see fig. 3 element 74 and col. 4, lines 26-40)..." (Office Action, page 2). This too is incorrect.

In detailing Figure 3, Measor states: "The signal **receive** facility of circuit 50 [of Figure 3] includes adaptive equalizer and quantized feedback circuit 74..." (Measor, 4:24-28, emphasis added). Measor's element 74 is therefore part of a receiver circuit (i.e. a "receive facility"), and not part of a driver circuit as required of claim 1. Of interest, circuit 50 of Measor's Figure 3 does include a driver circuit: current driver 62 is a driver circuit. However, current driver 62 does not include "an equalization circuit" as claimed, so the circuit of Measor's Figure 3 does not anticipate claim 1 for at least this reason.

The examiner has pointed to nothing in Measor that shows "a driver circuit [that includes] an equalization circuit" as recited in claim 1, and therefore fails to anticipate claim 1 for at least this reason. The rejection of claim 1 should therefore be withdrawn.

Claims 2-11

Claims 2-11 depend from claim 1, and therefore distinguish Measor for at least the same reasons claim 1 distinguishes. Furthermore, some of all of these dependencies include limitations that further distinguish them from Measor. Considering just claims 2 and 3, for example:

- Claim 2 recites the system of claim 1 "wherein the driver and receiver circuits are respective integrated circuits..." The examiner rejects claim 2 over Measor's col. 3, lines 45 and 46. This

is incorrect. According to the cited portion of Measor, and apparent from Figure 3, circuit 50 is all instantiated on “an application-specific integrated circuit” (Measor, 3:43-46), so the driver and receiver circuits of Measor’s Figure 3 do not meet the language of claim 2. Claim 2 therefore distinguishes Measor for this additional reason; and

- In claim 3, “the driver and receiver circuits and conductive path are incorporated within a common integrated circuit...” In depending upon claim 1, the conductive path of claim 3 extends from the driver circuit with the equalizer to the receiver. Such an arrangement is not shown in Measor’s Figure 3.

The rejections of claims 2-11 should therefore be withdrawn.

Claim 12

The arguments presented above in connection with claim 1 apply to amended claim 12, so the rejection of claim 12 should likewise be withdrawn.

Claims 14-19

Claims 14-19 and new claims 24-29 depend from claim 12, and therefore distinguish Measor for at least the same reasons claim 12 distinguishes. Claims 14-19 and new claims 24-29 are therefore believed to be patentable for at least these reasons.

Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 13 and 15 are objected to due to their dependence upon rejected claim 12. As noted above, claim 12 distinguishes Measor. Applicants have nevertheless amended claims 13 and 15 to include the subject matter of claim 12. Claims 20-23 are allowed.

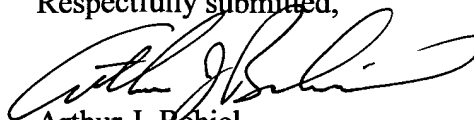
New Claims

New claims 24-29 depend from claim 12, and therefore distinguish the cited reference for at least the same reasons claim 12 distinguishes.

CONCLUSION

In light of the foregoing remarks and amendments, the pending claims are in condition for allowance; accordingly, applicants respectfully request a Notice of Allowance. If the examiner's next action is other than the allowance of the pending claims, the examiner is requested to call applicants' attorney at (925) 621-2113.

Respectfully submitted,



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Attention: Mail Stop Amendment, Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box
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